

I BRING YOU JOY

By the Same Authors

THE LIFE IN THE VINE

A manual for those who are searching for God, and for those who have practical problems.

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I Bring You Joy

INCLUDING "A BUSINESS MAN'S SEARCH
FOR GOD" AND "HOW HE FOUND HIM"

By

ALICE BISHOP KRAMER
ALBERT LUDLOW KRAMER



"In Thy presence is fullness of joy."

"My servants shall sing for joy of heart."

"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

*"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may
remain in you, and that your joy might be full."*

"Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full."

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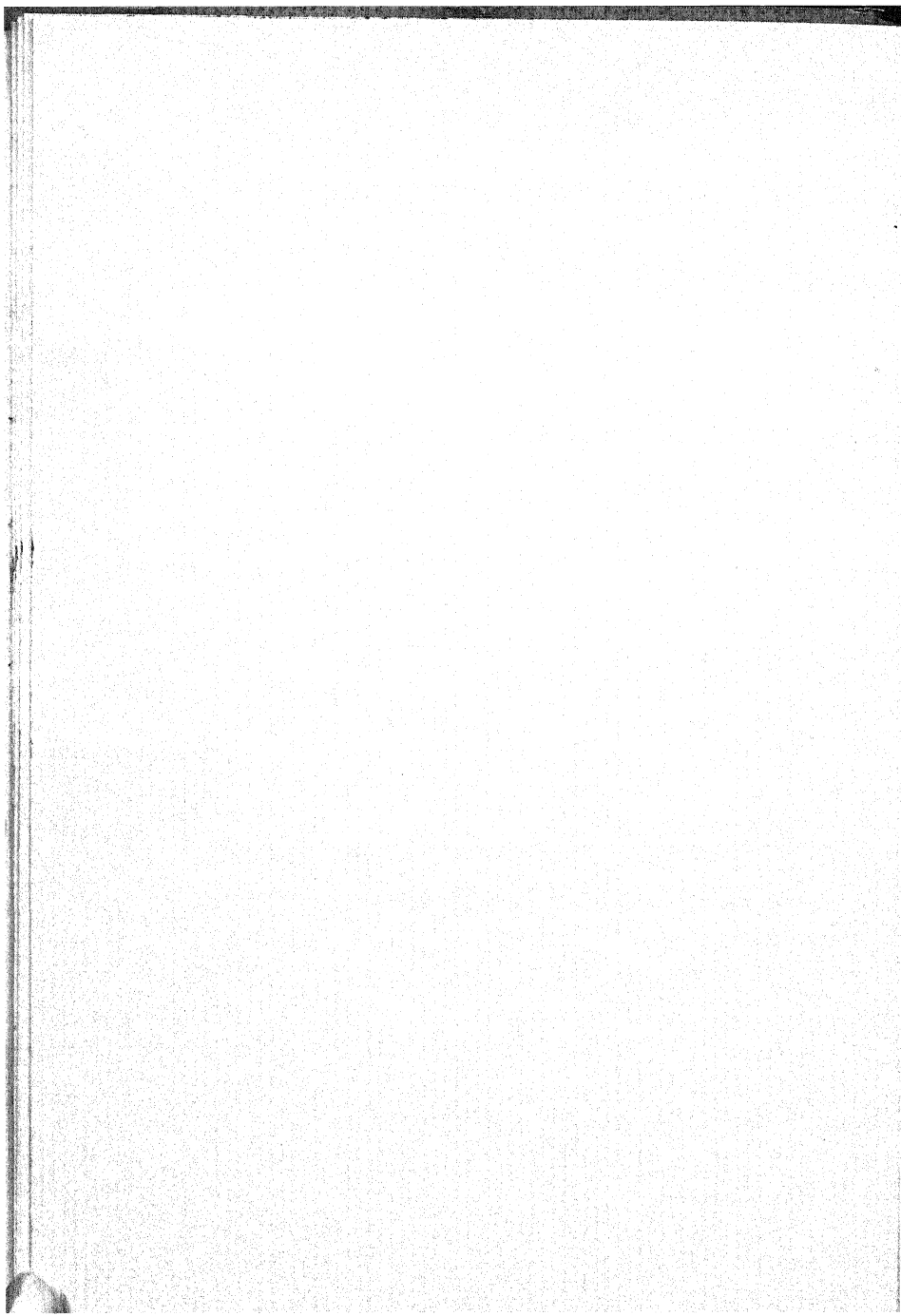
A. LUDLOW KRAMER

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portions of this book.

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*Dedicated to the Church the
world is waiting for but does not see—*

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.



FOREWORD

ARE you happy?

Are you willing to be happy?

Jesus Christ can and will make you happy if you will *let* Him.

He will give you much more than happiness.

He will bring you joy, which is happiness independent of your environment.

The authors have found life, truth, and reality through following the teachings of Jesus Christ.

We would know nothing of God or of the Life of the Spirit, if it were not for the Bible. It contains The Word—the thought—the wisdom—of the only source we know.

The need is for those who will interpret it in language modern man can understand. Those who are sceptical often lose their way because of the words which are used in presenting the truth.

We believe that Christianity must be restated in words that are fresh and vital. "I

had rather speak five words with my understanding . . . than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue". We believe that this must be done without dilution.

If our systems of religious education have departed from the highway of showing the way to God, the "evolution" of these systems will take us further away from it. We must be "revolutionary" and return to it.

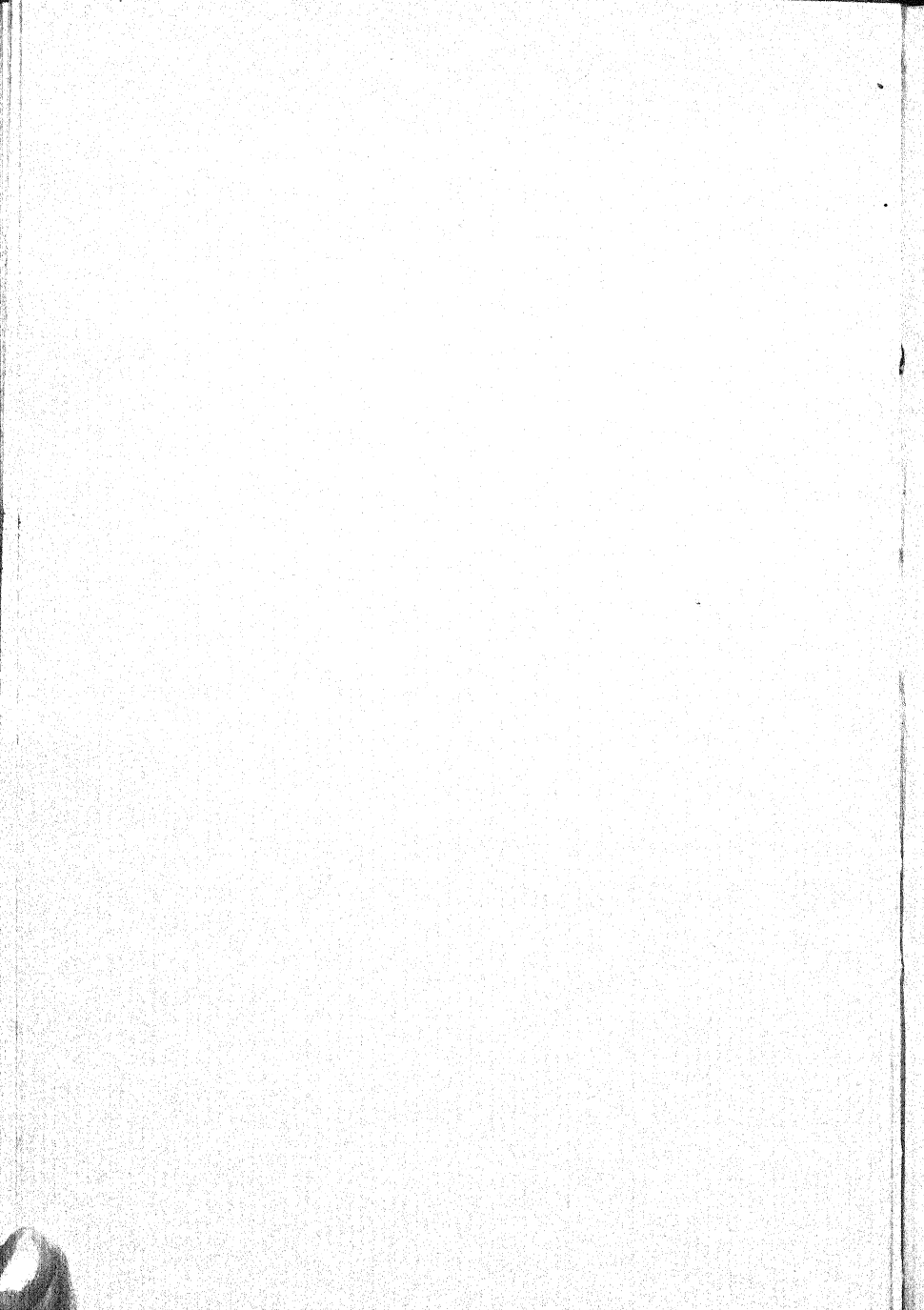
We must purify the use of the old words and must find new words to express The Word—the thought—of Jesus. We must blaze anew the old trail that has become overgrown with theology, philosophy, psychology, and social service.

We have tried to present The Way, The Truth and The Life without using such words as "covenant", "propitiation", "vicarious", "atonement" and "justification". We have used "faith" as meaning a belief that is in our heart, intellect and will—a belief that will take us into the life-giving, love-giving, and joy-giving Presence. We have used "faith" as meaning trust—complete confidence—a belief that we act upon. Our theology is a recital of our experiences with God.

The material in "A Business Man's Search for God" and in "How He Found Him" is taken from reports of talks at The Biblical Seminary in New York.

A. B. K. AND A. L. K.

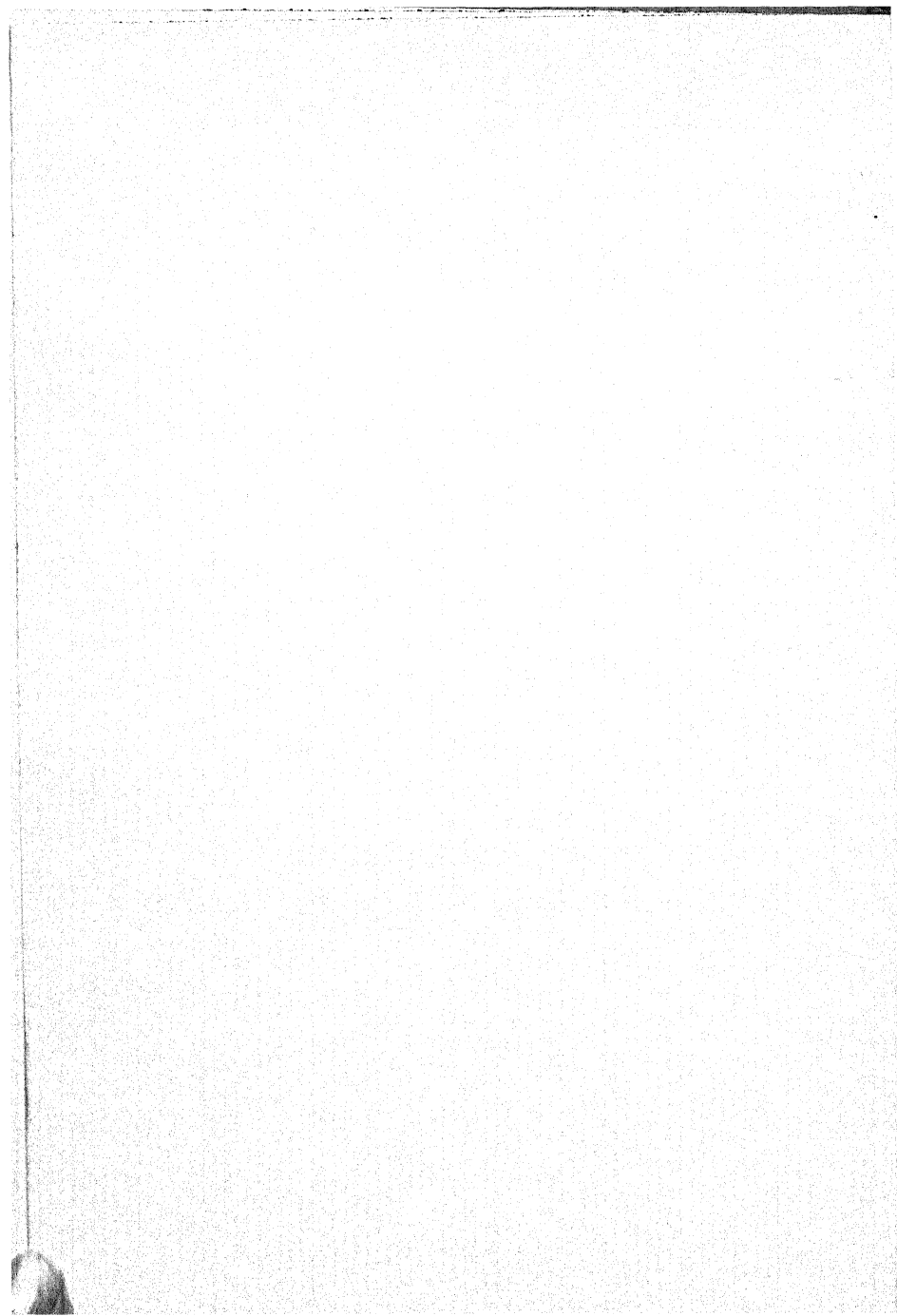
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ON PRAYER

WE are satisfied with life. We think we are self-sufficient. We dominate the animal and vegetable kingdoms. We are lords of the universe. We glorify man. We are self-satisfied. We take ourselves *very* seriously.

Someone we love dies. Or we have an accident. Or we lose our health. Or we lose our financial security. Or we are frustrated in some other way, and do things we had thought ourselves incapable of doing.

We become sour or we beg. We blame God, or doubt Him because we do not understand.

Or we realize our own littleness—our inadequacy. We realize that life is futile, even ridiculous. We turn to God and pray.

He always hears us. He will show us The Way to Himself as soon as we are willing to take it. He is waiting for us with His everlasting love.

If we rely solely on Him, He will guide us to Himself as fast as we are willing to go.

Our desire for Him is prayer. When our

obstinacy is replaced by willingness, and our self-sufficiency is replaced by humility, and our fears are replaced by trust, our Father will see us while we are still a great way off, and will make Himself known to us.

GOD AND MAN

God lives on a spiritual plane.

We live on a material plane.

God chose individuals to whom He made Himself known.

He showed them that the world was built upon a moral foundation, and that the yardstick was goodness—holiness—love.

He gave man the commandments—the law.

He made suffering inherent in disobedience: suffering in the man or suffering from without the man.

He has governed according to man's understanding—by fear and by love. "Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love"? He gave man a conscience.

It was foreseen from the beginning that man could not live up to God's standards by self-effort. God planned to send to us a "part of Himself"—His Son—to take the form of man. He came and "God was in Christ".

Jesus therefore lived here, and showed us

and taught us, that we would have Godlike powers if we surrender that which we thought was our right to ourselves ("Ye are not your own"), and trust Him—trust Him to the extent of being willing to do anything He asks us to do.

Jesus the Christ taught that He and The Father love us and are willing to raise us to a higher level, where we will have peace and joy instead of fear and suffering. We are not blamed for having a tendency to disobey; but we necessarily fail to have peace, joy and eternal life if we do not accept the way to them.

The offer is open to all of us who will accept God as our Master and trust His love. God will give us His Spirit to enable us to obey Him if we are willing to receive Him, that is, if we are *willing to be obedient*. God is holy, and He cannot condone anything unlike Himself; but we are absolved—forgiven, if we repent of doing our own way and accept Christ's way, that is, become *willing to be obedient*.

If we will not accept the salvation—the liberation—which Jesus brings us, if we will not surrender our own will and trust Him, if we will not accept the Holy Spirit who is offered to us, there is nothing God can do for

us. In this event, we are living as the race lived in Old Testament times—under the commandments—the law. We are living as though Jesus had never been born. We will continue to suffer from the pains inherent in disobedience.

God appeals to men, women and children through His love. He does not want them to suffer, but He will allow them to do so if it is necessary in order to lead them to Him. He wants to save them from an everlasting death, by giving them new Life. "He shall pluck my feet out of the net".

Jesus Christ is Life—health. He is Light—understanding. Evil is darkness. It is the absence of Life and Light. It is the absence of God.

Man would not know evil—there would be no evil so far as man was concerned—if he had always been obedient. When we are living in the light, we cannot see into the darkness.

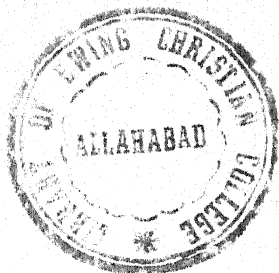
Man leaves evil—darkness—when he becomes *willing to do God's will*. He is reborn—given new Life, and the power to walk in the Light when he is *willing to be obedient*. "A new spirit will I put within you". Between the ideal and the actual there is only the catastrophe of disobedience.

God permits man to disobey—to have *less*. If man obeys, he has *more*. He is lifted to a higher plane by faith—by a trust that includes a willingness to obey the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Perfection will be attained when our surrender is so complete that God's love can pour into us and through us.

"Accepting", "receiving" Jesus as our Saviour merely in our minds—"believing" in Him merely intellectually—a conventional profession of faith—is not enough. Our "belief" must be a faith that trusts in Him and obeys Him. All paths to Him converge upon The Way of being willing to *abandon our wills and give Him possession of us*.

"He that abideth in Me". We must be willing to be cut off the old vine and grafted into the New. We then have direct and vital relationship to Him. We must continuously abide in Him. We must continuously walk with Him. We must have the humility of the blind who know they need to be led. We must *follow where His Holy Spirit leads us*. "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified".



OUR FATHER

He wants us to be like Himself.

He does not want us to be ignorant or helpless.

He does not want us to be obstinate or self centered. He wants us to be teachable.

He does not want us to make mistakes, to suffer, or to be lonely.

He wants to give us understanding and power.

He wants to give us as much spiritual understanding as we can use constructively.

He wants to give us as much power as we can use wisely.

He wants to give us as much love as we have the capacity to receive and use for others.

He does not want to use force to make us do His will. He allows us to stray from Him, but is always willing to forgive and welcome us.

He wants us to be His intimate companion and helper. He wants us to trust Him.

He wants us to be perfect, and He will not

save us from seeming calamities if they are necessary for the development of our character.

He will let us go without our supper or let us be sick or suffer, if it is necessary for our ultimate happiness.

He wants us to have sufficient wisdom and power to enable us to lead a victorious life.

He wants us to have security, peace and joy.

He wants our sympathetic interest in His plans for the universe. He wants us to be His junior partner.

He wants us to be so united to Him that He can make us happy by allowing us to influence Him.

WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

WE proclaim that God loves us.

We proclaim that He wants to be our Father.

We proclaim that He wants to guide us.

We proclaim that He has much He wants to give us.

We proclaim that He will guide us and give to us if we let Him do so.

We proclaim that what we need most urgently is the humility to be willing to obey.

We believe these are the teachings of Jesus.

We believe that He lived them.

Adam disobeyed. Jesus listened and obeyed.

The goal is not found by the road of philosophy, psychology, new thought, intellectual processes, mental acceptance of doctrine, or self-guided sacrifice. It is not what we think that lifts us. We are lifted by God because of that which we are willing to do.

We need distrust of self, and confidence in God.

We must realize that energizing power does

not come to us until we know it is bitter to do even that which is good without God.

The humility to surrender is the bridge to eternal life. When we realize that He loves us we have the courage to do so. That is one reason why proclaiming the love of God is so important.

THE STRAIT GATE AND NARROW WAY

WE make the most important decision in our lives when we *turn toward God*. The most efficacious thing we can then do, is to pray to Him to show us The Way. Jesus Christ is The Way: "He that believeth on me"; "He that feeds on me"; "As many as receive Him"; "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ".

If we believe on Jesus Christ we are saved—reborn into everlasting life; but how can we believe? How can we obtain faith? Faith is a gift. Is there anything we can do to experience this grace from God?

All we have to do is to accept the gift—to accept Jesus Christ Himself. Our salvation centers in our will. We need the *will to believe*. It centers in our *willingness*. If we are *willing* to believe, God gives us the faith to do so. His commands are also enablings. If we are agnostic, we can find God; if we are atheistic we cannot do so.

Our faith must come from our heart, and

not merely from our minds. We must be willing to trust God. In the final analysis, we must be *willing to be obedient*. Disobedience is sin. We must be willing to be saved from sin.

If we start out on a road to The Father instead of a road to the Son, we find there is the same condition to be complied with. There is the same *seeming* impasse: we are saved and re-created children of God when we comply with His will, but we have not the power to do so until we are re-created. Are we then lost? By no means. We are lifted when we become *willing* to do His will. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know". Our "*willingness* is counted as obedience".

We are lifted when we surrender our own will—when we give up our right to ourselves—when we give ourselves to God.

"Present your bodies . . . unto God . . . that ye may prove what is that . . . perfect will of God".

"Present all your faculties to Him . . . so that you may learn by experience what God's will is" [Weymouth].

It is when we realize our own inadequacy and are willing to let God take possession of

us, that He reveals Himself to us. This humility is the key to heaven. It is only after we have adopted God as our Father, and He has adopted us as His children, that we have the right to ask for His guidance.

There are many roads leading to God, but we must all go through the "strait gate and narrow way" of being *willing to be obedient*, both as to our character and activities. We do not *meet Him* by calling "Lord, Lord", but only when we become willing to do anything He may ask us to do.

His Spirit does not fully enter us excepting He be given complete possession. We must say from our heart: "Not as I will but as Thou wilt". Only then will it please God to reveal Himself, and to reveal His Son in us.

We are saved by Christ when our faith is such that we are *willing to obey* The Father. When we have emptied ourselves, and wait upon Him to plan the work He wants us to do, we become conductors to bring others in contact with Him.

It is only after we have gone to our Creator for our recreation—rebirth—that we have the power to do His will. "The Spirit of life in Jesus Christ hath made me free from the law

of sin and death"; "I can do all things through Jesus Christ which strengtheneth me"; "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you".

We know He is God because of the new power, understanding and love in us. We become all that we could not become before. We have the power to make our ideals real. We attain a happiness we could not achieve by art or conquest.

The "strait gate and narrow way" is found when we are willing to obey the Father, or believe in—trust and obey—the Son. If we find One, Their unity is revealed to us.

GOD'S GIFTS

God does not ask us to give that which we have and accept less. He tells us that He has much to give us if we will trust Him. If we will adopt Him as our Father:

He will wipe out all wrong acts in our life so that they will never trouble us again.

Our desires will be changed so that we will not want to do that which is wrong.

We will be given the power not to do that which is wrong.

We will be saved much suffering in the future.

We will be rid of all fears, excepting the fear of doing wrong.

We will be given a fresh understanding—an understanding of many things we did not understand before.

We will receive an influx of love for God and for others.

We will be given a usefulness and power we never had before.

We will be given a beauty of character we never had before.

We will lose an excessive love for things.

We will have someone to take the burden of all our problems.

We will not be lonely.

We will lose our tenseness or restlessness.

We will be freed from the slavery of our emotions.

We will have a fresh intellectual clarity.

We will have a feeling of security.

We will have peace passing human understanding, and joy unspeakable.

We will have a happy fellowship with others who have been born into His Kingdom.

We will acquire increasing faith through our experiences with Him.

We will have eternal life.

WALKING WITH GOD

WE are born with the "seed of spirituality" in us. It is like the acorn—it contains the oak—potentially. We cannot make the acorn grow. God makes it grow when we *comply with the conditions*. We are changed into new men when we comply with the conditions: when we realize we cannot change ourselves, and are willing to allow God to transform us.

We can be intelligent optimists when we see men accepting Christ—surrendering to God.

As new men, our growth depends on our continuous surrender to God. He is the husbandman. We must rest in Him, and wait on Him while He sanctifies us.

We must ask Him to search our hearts to uncover our defects, and must then surrender their elimination to Him. He will do the pruning.

If we are to be perfected, it is necessary that we go through experiences. We are tested by them, and our faults are uncovered by them. Sickness and unpleasant associations often

show us how far short we fall of the command to love others as ourselves. We must be more than innocent: we must be virtuous.

If our dispositions or characters are such that we are impatient, restless, resentful, resisting, unloving or critical of others, we can know that we shall have to remain in these associations, or go through similar experiences, until we cease to be these things. At such times, we must be honest with ourselves and realize that it is our own sanctification that is lacking. We can explain many things if we remember that it is the nature of the Father to reproduce Himself. "To those who love God, all things (confusion, disappointment, pain) work together for good". "My hope is in Thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions". "Show me Thy ways, O Lord; Teach me Thy paths". "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with eagle wings; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint".

If we are abiding in Him, He always answers us. He gives us anything we ask or something that is better. If we ask to understand the fault that made a calamity necessary

for us, He always enlightens us. Clouds are dew-drops in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Disbelievers and "intellectual believers" tell us that God will not guide us in detail, that He will not protect us, and that He will not answer all our prayers. How do they know? We can know only when we have abandoned self for Him.

These are the promises of Jesus:

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you".

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, nothing shall be impossible to you".

"The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things". "When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth". "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered". "The sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them".

In Proverbs we find: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowl-

edge Him, and He shall direct thy paths". "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established".

In John we find: "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man shall teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him".

We must rely solely on God for our guidance. He may send it through other people or through books, but we must not look to anyone but Him.

Those of us who have found God and can witness to Him with certainty, realize how low we have stood in the moral order, and how in our re-creation He has equipped us with wings.

When asked for an opinion we no longer find it necessary merely to quote Biblical or theological phrases. Our new understanding—the comprehension in our hearts—the interpretation by the Holy Spirit—enables us to express The Word—the thought—of God in words of our own. We have both an old and an original story to tell when we have been with Jesus.

When we actually meet God, we have more than a feeling of guilt. A vision of His holi-

ness, contrasted with our inherent vileness, make us feel profane in our approach to Him.

Unable to appreciate His overwhelming grace, we feel the need of more than repentance. Unable to perceive the greatness of the love of God, we are apt to make Him in our image, and attribute to Him demands we would make if we were God.

Our very proper feelings of awe as we behold the holiness, majesty and glory of God tends to result in our being anthropomorphic. When we behold the glory of the Lord, we very naturally fall upon our face. Our mistake consists in interpreting our feeling of nothingness as a demand from God.

From the time of "Adam", God has been trying to lift us, and make us like Himself. He has put a brake on our disobedience by making suffering inherent in it, and He has never condoned it; but He has freely absolved—remitted—acquitted—when we repent and are willing to believe and obey.

Jesus did not die to appease an angry God. He died in order that we might have the Life that would enable us to have no disposition to break the law. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts".

God seems to have always held out ideals beyond the reach of most of us. In Old Testament history there were only a few who approached His ideals. God, "that He might be just", sacrificed His Son that we might be given the power to obey Him. We fulfill our part of the new covenant when we accept Him.

The wages of sin are suffering and death. Through the Living Christ we have Life—more abundant Life while we are on earth, and Life eternal.

We should take off our shoes as we approach God.

But we should not be solemn.

We should be joyous.

THE CROSS

CHRIST's sacrifice began before He came into the world. He renounced the glory of the heavenly life for all He became here. He unfolded His Sonship. Through Him we become sons by adoption.

Revelation came in His person. His teachings were the explanation of His experience. Jesus could be tempted, but The Christ could not sin. It is through Him we are released and transformed.

He came not merely to show us that God is love, but to be with us and in us as the loving God. He was the completion of our material evolution. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him".

The Christ was born man, was tempted as man, and suffered as man. He taught that we could overcome the world by a union with God—by doing the will of God.

Jesus proved on The Cross, and by His resurrection, that all He had taught was true. He had the wisdom to show us His humanity

when He said "I thirst" and "Woman behold Thy Son". It may have been His humanity also which spoke the words "My God why hast Thou forsaken me".

He showed His love when He said "Father forgive them for they know not what they do". He showed His power when He said to the thief "Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt be with me in Paradise".

Thus on The Cross He showed His humanity and the love, wisdom, and power of God. Finally Jesus said "It is finished"; and The Christ showed He had not lost faith when He said "Father unto Thy hands I commend my spirit".

The Son of God and the Son of Man shared His thoughts and feelings with us even when He was on The Cross.

Jesus, Son of Man said that He of Himself was nothing, but that he who saw The Christ in Him saw The Father. We are saved by His life, death and resurrection when we take up our cross and follow Him, that is, when we consent to the crucifixion of the "old" man, and are willing to allow Him to make us a "new" man.

As Andrew Murray says: "God loves you,

not because you are clever, not because you are good, but because He is your Father”.

To us, The Cross represents the sacrificial love of The Father and The Son.

It represents the victory and the joy of the Guiltless One suffering for those He loves.

"GOODNESS" AND THE PROBLEM OF SICKNESS

It is a human tendency to compare ourselves with other people, and to regard ourselves as good when we see many whom we regard as worse than ourselves.

This viewpoint however shows a failure to understand the message of Jesus.

Jesus came to inaugurate a new race of men.

By the white light of God's standards no person is good. "There is none righteous, no, not one". "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God".

We can never think we are good if we keep our eye single—if it is focused on God. This is the area of our free will. We have a *potential* capacity for evil or good. Strictly speaking, we cannot directly choose between them. However we can be willing to let our self-will die and allow God to make us good. If we choose to rely on God, He will sanctify us. He

is the Bread of Life. If we try to feed on Him, He will enable us to so so.

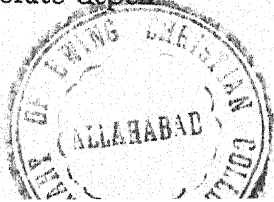
We cannot become children of God through our intellectual beliefs, or through our attempts at goodness.

The natural man who thinks he is good is awakened from his delusion when he gets a vision of the holiness of God. A so-called good life without surrender and re-birth is a lonely and powerless one.

It is a mistake to accept all sickness with "resignation". The "suggestion" that it is God-sent would tend to its retention even though it enabled us to bear it more easily.

Our attitude should always be one of inquiry to God as to why we are sick. He has promised us that *if we are abiding in Him* that we will always receive at least an answer.

If we have not given that which we thought was our right to ourselves to Him, we should of course do so. Are we not presumptuous in asking anything of a Commander with whom we have not enlisted? Why should we expect healing or other favors from a King if we refuse to become His subjects? "Abiding" means absolute surrender and absolute dependence.



Any seeming calamity is a blessing if it causes us to seek God and obtain the gift of eternal life. Some of us are so obstinate that we must be shipwrecked before we will accept Him as Master.

We know that sickness is caused not only by the gross sins, but also by hate, fear, worry, impatience, mental impurity, bad temper, resentments and unkindness. In these cases sin is the disease and Christ is the cure.

Christ is Life. Sickness is often an expression of a lack of His fulness within us.

Our prayer should be for the purpose of ascertaining His will for us. "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know His will".

To be cured by Him, we must realize our own inadequacy, believe in His power, and accept Him as Saviour. We must have an earnest desire to be cured.

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed".

When dealing with others who are ill, we can never judge their righteousness: we can never

know as to their conscious or unconscious sins, or as to their needing a "thorn in the flesh" to keep them humble or pure. They must ask God to search their hearts. We have known many cases where He has uncovered defects, and when this resulted in repentance, a cure "automatically" followed.

In order that we may be used to cure others, we must be fully abiding in Christ. We must be receptive to the voice of the Holy Spirit to whom we must look for direction and authority.

When we give God possession of us we exchange a life in the cocoon for a Life of liberty and power.

LOVE AND HAPPINESS

WE have read and heard a lot of loose talk about "happiness".

Every normal man and woman desires to be happy. We should not deceive ourselves about this because of the fact that we can conceive of higher peaks that we should want to climb. Happiness may not be an idealistic end in itself, but it is a sign of healthy mindedness for us to desire a path which leads to it.

It cannot be directly achieved, nor is it an art. It is a result. If we put in the proper ingredients, happiness will come out. What are the ingredients?

Worldly accomplishment gives us satisfaction, but it does not bring happiness. Many things bring us temporary pleasure, but they do not bring happiness. Even an intellectually interesting life will not bring it.

In short, a continuously happy life is an impossibility for the natural man. No thinking person can be an optimist as to the capacity

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of unregenerate man to achieve it. Only the feeble minded can do so.

The Key to happiness is love, and this is a gift from our Creator to those who have been re-created by Him.

Not long ago we sat by the bedside of a dying woman who had experienced every blessing that life has to offer. We asked her what had made her the happiest. She did not answer that it was husband, children, home, or position. She replied "*To love*". It was in *giving* that she found her greatest happiness.

Love—giving—enlarges us. Any kind of hoarding causes us to shrink.

The natural man, in whom the Spirit of God is not discernible, does not want to give. He wants to receive. In consequence, he has no capacity for happiness. That which is happiness for the re-born is unhappiness for him. He compares himself to the animals, and because he is better off than they, he may think he is happy.

God is love. It is the divine in us that loves. It is the divine in us that makes us happy in *giving*. "God is love; and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him".

God is love. He is patient with us. He is

kind and generous to us. He is never irritated with us. He is never resentful. He is always forgiving. He is unselfish and humble. He washes our feet. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee".

God is love. "We love Him because He first loved us". Jesus was crucified for us, and "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life".

Obedient faith is The Way. It is through faith that we obtain the power to love—the power of love. Faith is the means. Love is the object. The result is happiness.

To experience—realize—His love fully we must give ourselves to Him, and be adopted by Him as His children. Most of us have enough of the divine in us to love someone. It almost always accompanies motherhood. Our inherited and acquired antipathies stand in the way of a universal love. Our resistance as human beings stands in the way of the in-streaming of His love for others.

Wider circles of happiness result from obedience. Through emptying ourselves, and lov-

ing as He did, we become witness of the love that gave itself to die. We are only able to love as He does when we have been grafted in The Vine, and are abiding in Him.

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you". The command is an enabling to those who are willing to be born again.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned". When we are re-created, we have the desire to love. Christ in us enables us to do so. As a branch of The Vine we find ourselves bearing the fruit.

INCREASING THE AREA OF OUR SURRENDER

(Prepared originally for our own use)

GOD, help us to know that if we go to Thee confessing and repenting, and willing to be emptied, that Thou will lead us in a revival; and that out of us will flow, as an inevitable consequence, rivers of living water. Help us to realize that it is because of a lack of our surrender that "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few".

Help us to realize that if our prayers for our loved ones—for those who are suffering mental and physical anguish—are not answered, it is often because we are not abiding fully and continuously in Thee.

Give us the desire to surrender all to Thee. Liberate us from self. Help us to empty ourselves so that Thou canst come in and guide us, and use us, for Thy purposes.

Will you give up the lower so that the higher can enter into you?

Will you pray to God asking Him to make plain to you that which you have failed to surrender or any way in which you are not doing His will?

Will you ask Him if you have:

Given yourself completely to Him—given up your “right to yourself”?

Given Him complete possession of you?

Given up any idea of being your own master?

Given up your will?

Become willing to be and do anything He asks?

Become willing to let Him take you where and how He will?

Become willing to give up your own planning and accept His plan for you?

Become willing to surrender everybody and everything to Him?

Become willing to surrender your scholarship and wisdom?

Will you ask Him if you have:

Surrendered your preconceived ideas and opinions?

Surrendered your pride in having such dominion as He has given you?

Surrendered your pride in having done *your* best?

Surrendered your pride in being that which the world calls good?

Surrendered your pride in your intellect—in your reasoning?

Surrendered your pride in overcoming temptation?

Surrendered your pleasure in overcoming temptation?

Surrendered your desire to be prominent or distinguished?

Surrendered your pride in having been a successful teacher or preacher?

Surrendered your artistry or your pride in being an orator or a poet?

Surrendered your self-sanctification—given up self-effort—self-discipline?

If you do not want to make these surrenders will you pray that God will give you the desire to do so?

Will you ask Him if you are lacking in power because you are lacking in faith? "We are going to pieces for lack of men of creative

faith" (E. Stanley Jones). " 'Because of your unbelief' was, for all time, the Master's explanation and reproof of impotence and failure in His church" (Andrew Murray).

Will you ask Him if you are lacking in faith because you are lacking experiences with Him? "Acquaint now thyself with me and be at peace".

Will you ask Him if you are failing to have experiences with Him because you have not surrendered?

Will you take time to listen for the answer?

Will you pray that you will want God to mould you as He wishes?

Will you pray that you will want to get yourself out of the picture and let Him function?

Will you pray that you will want to be a selfless conduit so that He can use you?

"Prove me now herewith, said the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

A BUSINESS MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD

BEFORE starting the story of a business man's search for God—before starting the objectionable “I”, let me say it has really been “we”. My wife and I took our final steps to Him together. Our listening, the writing of our books, and our pastoral work has been together. We have walked together with Him. Our prayers for guidance and our prayers of intercession have been together.

It was largely God's kind of love pouring through her for me that enabled me to find Him. God—Jesus—saves us by loving us. If you want to save anyone, get self out of the way, and let God use you as a channel for His love.

My worldly life, as seen from the outside, was conventional and uninteresting. I was energetic, ambitious, proud, self-seeking, conceited and self-willed. I did not see myself this way at the time, but as I look back upon what St. Paul calls the “old man”, that is a pretty good description of him. These quali-

ties take us sometimes a long way in our life in the world, and I secured every worldly thing I had ever wanted. I became a business man, and retired at the age of thirty-eight to devote the balance of my life to travel, sports and study. I was pretty well satisfied with myself.

I was not however really happy—certainly not continuously so. I had occasionally moments of great happiness, but they were fleeting and entirely dependent on others. As the years rolled on, I became less happy. I hardly knew why. I always seemed to be wanting something, and often I did not know just what it was I wanted. I was dissatisfied with life. Now, I know the reason for my unhappiness. I had been attempting to live a life independent of God, and like Adam I had not succeeded in hiding from Him. My life was really a complete life of sin, because I was asserting my right to myself, and leaving God out of my calculations.

I turned to Philosophy and read about everything I could obtain on this subject. The last writers seemed to agree with Plato, so it seemed to me that we had been having debates for two thousand years and were back where we started. I was impressed particularly with

Schiller's "Esthetic Education". His thought was that a successful and satisfying life consisted of establishing an esthetic equilibrium—in preventing too wide swings of the pendulum; but he does not tell us how this is to be accomplished. As a matter of fact, I have noticed that men and women who try to be a comfortable gray, generally find the shade of gray becoming darker, and often end by being coal black.

Then I studied Psychology and found it a fascinating hobby. I have a friend whose hobby is the study of bugs, but people seemed more interesting to me. I cannot claim to have loved people at this time, but I was tremendously interested in them, and many life histories were laid bare to me. I helped to solve many problems, although I realize now that I took the responsibility of decisions I should not have taken. I finally got to a point when I was doing original research, and discovered the cause of paralysis, resulting from "shock" or "shell shock". I think that this discovery contains valuable lessons. It shows the desirability of our being honest with ourselves. Indeed, it shows that tragedy may result if we are not.

If a man is afraid and acknowledges the fear to himself, he may have a conflict between his ideals and his instinct for self-preservation, which may be decided either way; but he will not suffer from "shock". On the other hand, if he does not acknowledge this fear, but represses it, he is apt to be a victim of shock. Unacknowledged emotions of any kind tend to multiply and may cause havoc to our nervous systems.

I came to realize that if I was to be a practical psychologist that I must explore for myself instead of spending my time in a "high chair" trying to interpret the experiences of others. Eventually I learned that God gives us the humility and courage to do this if we call upon Him to do so. "I think that philosophy is still rude and elementary . . . we should feel more confidence . . . from the mouth of a man of the world . . . analysis must be corrected by rough experience ("The Natural History of Intellect"—Emerson).

I came to realize that one experience was worth a hundred theories. I perceived that the way of philosophy and psychology did not produce Christ-like men and women.

In connection with psychology, I studied

psychoanalysis. The theory of psychoanalysis is that we have a subconscious mind which contains our history from birth, and metaphorically at least, contains the history of the race. I have come to the conclusion that it is better to leave this realm undisturbed. I was psychoanalyzed, and I found that going back into my feelings as a caveman or imagining such feelings was far from wholesome. It may have a diagnostic value, but I cannot see that it has any therapeutic value. It makes you feel like a worm, and does not show you how to be a butterfly.

I was seeking truth and none of these studies seemed to bring me close to reality.

About this time I was unconsciously beginning to take steps toward God, because I was starting to realize my limitations.

I think the first step was when I realized I could not change people. Most of us attempt to do this during the early part of our lives. A man and girl get married and then often try to make each other over, and when children come along they try to make the children over.

I also realized that I had been conceited in thinking that I should make people over. Who was I to judge? That which I thought was a

desirable type was not necessarily so. We make moulds for others because we think we are standards by which their thinking and acting should be judged. Our intolerance is rooted in our conceit.

My next step was when I attained an intellectual appreciation of humility. I think this came to me in reading George Washington's letters to Congress, and I saw the beauty of that rare combination of courage and humility. Before this I had looked upon humility as the opposite of courage, and had regarded it as a weakness.

My next step was when I realized I had been born wanting, that is, selfish. "Aren't we all"? At least I have never known a wholesome small child who spent his days in thinking what he could do for his mother and father.

It seems to me that conceit and selfishness are about the two most devastating traits we can have, and it was a shock to me to find myself convicted of both of them.

Then I realized that my occasional periods of depression were the reaction from periods of over-confidence. In spite of my efforts toward an "esthetic equilibrium" these periods of over-confidence persisted. Dr. Eliot said that the

great danger of America was its herd instinct, and I found that over-confidence and the subsequent depression were contagious, and I could not find a serum that would make me immune. It became increasingly clear to me that as natural men, we have very definite limitations, and that even insanity can come from not realizing it.

My next step was in realizing that if all stood on their rights, we would have a state of anarchy. I thus found out for myself the truth of one of the fundamental principles of Jesus' teachings.

Most of us make excuses for our sins—we explain them to ourselves intellectually, and we are apt to be tolerant of similar sins in others. We are however intolerant of other kinds of sins—ones we have not committed or had the temptation to commit. We fight facing ourselves, and I think I had achieved some honesty with myself when I realized, with a shock, that I had been really only making intellectual excursions, and that I did not have a real desire to be spiritual.

However, I was beginning to know myself and I had learnt the desirability of doing this from the philosophers and psychologists. I had

not reached the point where I was asking God to search my heart, but I was comparatively honest with myself and did not have the difficulty of being convicted of sin.

At times I seemed worse than the world, and at times the world seemed even worse than I. I could see that men who thought they were good, really were not so; and were what the world calls good only because they were cowards, afraid of others' opinions, or were afraid of consequences.

I saw men and women who thought they were good completely bowled over by sin when their needs or even wants were frustrated. I have yet to meet a man in middle life, who has walked without God, who would not acknowledge that he has done things he had believed himself incapable of doing. How do any of us know what we would have done had we been raised in an evil environment? How do any of us know what we would have done, without God, if some of our actual needs had not been filled?

I saw many men and women of the world who were restless and confused, and who did not understand their own restlessness and con-

fusion. Some of them were wholesome; none of them were continuously happy.

They judged each other largely by the physical shell in which the soul was encased. Sometimes they were so deeply rooted in conceit that they disliked even constructive criticism. "Sensitiveness" is often unbounded egotism. They disliked anyone who made them face themselves. I saw many men and women keeping themselves active in one way or another so that they would not have to face themselves. Are we not apt to be Godless if we are never alone with God?

I saw some trying to obtain a temporary oblivion. Sometimes they were trying to obtain peace through physical exhaustion.

I saw that all classes had an infinite potential capacity for evil, resulting sometimes in dregs at the bottom, scum at the top, and plenty of dirt in between. I saw men in the so called upper classes drug themselves with alcohol just as they do it with "smoke" in the Bowery.

As clergymen and missionaries how are you going to handle those men and women? A man in the grip of alcohol recently went to a clergyman for help. The clergyman told him

he should "exert his will power and fight it out with himself". He had been doing this for many years, so that he left the parsonage utterly hopeless. The clergyman also suggested that whenever he felt like a drink that he go and take some aromatic spirits of ammonia, a suggestion about on a par with telling a tuberculosis patient to eat spinach and get strong.

How are you going to handle men and women in the grip of morphine? How are you going to advise a cultured woman with a lovely home, if she comes to you and tells you she is in love with a man (whom you know to be despicable), and that she cannot help it? Tell her she should be able to? She may know that. Or a woman possessed by demons? If you tell her she is suffering from hallucinations she will be through with you. Or a woman on the border line of insanity?

There is nothing you can do for some of these unless you employ supernatural power. Have you got it? What will you do regarding tuberculosis or arthritis? Dismiss the patient to a doctor, without inquiring as to whether there is a spiritual cause? Jesus tells you to heal the sick.

Most people have discovered that suffering is inherent in sin. Many want to give it up. As natural men we are living in quicksand. Men often do things as though they were compelled to by an invisible arm around them. "Demons" is a more accurately descriptive term than many of the psychological ones.

I think it would be a good thing for theological seminaries to adopt the "case system" and give students a course in Shakespeare, Balzac and Conrad. The characters of these writers are not unreal. How would you handle their difficulties? Men and women are trapped by life sometimes. We should understand not only their wills, but also their appetites. A man may have a weak will with little inclination to do wrong. He cannot understand a man with strong appetites and pities him declaring he has a weak will! The man with strong appetites cannot understand why the man who seemingly has none does not become wholly spiritual. Just as it is difficult to understand sins unlike our own, so it is difficult for one temperament to understand another.

It is a significant fact that life looked awful to me at the height of my worldly success. It does to many, and many men contemplate

suicide sometime during their life. How are you going to deal with them? The psychiatrist may argue that it is foolish to give up life because it means oblivion. That is apt to urge a suffering man to suicide—oblivion would seem like Heaven to him. If the clergyman merely tells him he will lose eternal life, he is giving the same answer as the psychiatrist.

During my search for truth I studied some of the so-called "new thought" books, but I came to realize that these were very old. They were all variations, with new vocabularies, of "mental science"—belief in one's own powers, although one's own powers were often called God! Thousands of books have been written by many who admittedly have not arrived, but are so sure they are on the way, that they want to share with others.

About this time I was confronted with various calamities and problems. I have never believed that the God who loves us would want us to suffer, but undoubtedly His love is wise enough to allow us to suffer if it is necessary for us to do so in order that we shall find Him. There is nothing "mushy" about the love of God. If you have a cancer He does not give you a soothing sirup.

It looked as though the results of my life's work were going to be lost. Figuratively I had been living on the sixtieth floor, and God mercifully allowed me to fall out the window. It looked as though my little world was breaking up and I developed more than an intellectual understanding of humility. I developed a feeling of humility. What a difference between that which we know in our head and that which we know in our heart!

I realized that my life had been built on sand and forgetting my futile efforts to change others, I started in with all my will power, to change myself. I had a God-given wish to be different from what I was. I used all the intellectual methods—the methods of reasoning. I tried to eliminate sin by dealing with one sin at a time. The trouble with this was that while I was working on sin number two, sin number one started coming back. I tried new interests. I tried “neglecting” my sins. Finally I realized I could not change myself, and as I did not like myself as I was, I was trapped.

In despair I turned to the church. I am a church member and as a boy I had attended church and Sunday school regularly, but be-

cause of my memories, I returned to it reluctantly.

My wife and I are now enthusiastic church workers, but I had gone to church very little since I was a boy. For that reason perhaps I can look at it more objectively than those who have been churchmen always. I have to admit that during my early church association I learned nothing; I was bored and depressed by its solemnity; and I found no "glad tidings".

I know now that clergymen are divided into three classes: those who have found God and who can show the way; those who have found Him, but not knowing how or why they found Him are unable to show the way to others; and unfortunately some who have not found Him.

It was my misfortune not to meet any of the first class. One clergyman tried to arouse my emotions, although it seemed to me my emotions were sufficiently aroused. Besides, although finding God may be a very emotional experience, I do not see how one can find God through one's emotions. Another told me to go to the house of God, and that I would find God there. I had often sat alone in churches

and cathedrals, but had not found Him. Since then I have talked to people who found God in church, but I have also talked to people who have found Him in bar rooms. Another talked to me in theological and figurative language that I could not understand. Another talked to me in frightening language and gave me more than I could bear. I was very unhappy as I was, but it seemed like jumping from the frying pan into the fire to "offer myself as a burnt offering" and become "broken bread and spilled wine". Jesus led gently so that men would understand that joy accompanies sacrifices made under His guidance.

I say to you that unless you have found God, you have nothing to offer as a clergyman or missionary. Unless you can tell men and women how to find Him, you have but little to offer. Your job is to lead bad and good people to God so that He can convert them into His children. The church must show the way to supernatural power. If it has nothing to offer above our power as natural men, it should not wonder if it does not attract.

I was certainly now thoroughly convicted of sin and earnestly searching for God.

How could I find Him?

How could I get the power to live up to the ideals He had put in me?

How could I overcome sin?

If I did not want to give up sin, how could I get the desire to do so?

If I was not searching with all my heart, how could I get the desire to search more earnestly?

I felt that there was an available power somewhere, but I did not know how to avail myself of it. I felt as Emerson did when he was searching for God: "I wish to know the laws of this wonderful power, that I may domesticate it . . . that I may learn to live with it wisely, court its aid, catch sight of its splendor, feel its approach, hear and save its oracles and obey them".

Not long ago, I spent a day visiting the haunts of my school and college days. Often the thought came to me: "I wish someone had told me about God in words that I could have understood". During many years I had thought that Christianity was asking us to give up a lot of fun in this life for the privilege of walking the golden streets in a life hereafter. I did not know that Christ was offering to save me much suffering here and now, giving

me joy in its stead, as well as offering me eternal life instead of annihilation or eternal wretchedness.

The object of the church is to acquaint man with His Creator. It failed to show me the way even intellectually.

Clergymen and missionaries will be judged by their fruitbearing. This means the conversion of the individual. *If enough individuals are changed*, changed men will make the necessary changes in customs, economic systems, and forms of government. An ideal system cannot exist if it is composed of avaricious men. We cannot create love by law. As we cannot change others, or even change ourselves, it is silly to try to do so by legislation.

At this stage of this autobiography, I leave you with the problem: how can I find God?

HOW HE FOUND HIM

"God help us to realize in our hearts our utter unworthiness and helplessness without Thee. Help us to realize that Thou canst use us only when we will let Thee mould us."

I WANT to speak a little further about many roads which purport to lead to God but do not. You will find many people who will have to retrace their steps along these roads before they can make a proper start. I had to do so. The so-called "religious sciences" and "new thought" ignore the necessity of a spiritual birth; or define it as a changing of our minds, which we are to accomplish in one way or another as of ourselves.

They often teach that man can change his character and can find God by striving. They teach us to develop our wills, to use self-effort, and to try to lift ourselves to a spiritual plane. This is like trying to lift our bodies by our own bootstraps.

Some of them teach that our spiritual birth took place at the same time as our natural birth: that we were born children of God, and

that all we need to do is to believe this in order to exercise His power. They attempt to deal with the problems of "supply" and "sickness", but the problems of character and of sin are often left untouched. They have not found the "strait-gate and narrow way". They are trying to climb into the sheepfold by some other method.

We must have a great deal of patience in dealing with those who mistakingly have been following wrong roads. If you ask them whether they realize that they are sinners according to God's standards, you must be prepared to have them tell you that they know they are "perfect children of God". Your duty is to explain to them that they are only even a child of God potentially.

The first good advice coming to me was from a layman. He advised me to study the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Dr. Henry Drummond was helpful. In his book "The Changed Life", he explains that we tend to become like those we admire, and that as we hold the mirror up to our Lord, we tend to become, or want to become like Him.

I believed in God, but I wanted a fulfillment of the promise that I could find Him and know

He was God. I wanted Him to make Himself known to me—to reveal Himself to me. I wanted His guidance and the power to overcome.

I instinctively knew there were *conditions* I must fulfill, but I could not find anyone to tell me what they were.

It seemed to me that I was at a confusing impasse. I was told I would find God when I followed His commandments—loved Him and loved my neighbor; but I could not do these things. We understand very little of the Bible till we are reborn. I read: "To him that knocketh it shall be opened". I was certainly knocking, but nothing happened. I read: "Behold I stand at the door and knock". So far as I understood, I had opened the door. What was wrong?

However, God kept His promise as He always does. I was searching for Him with all my heart, and He put various books in my hand, and revealed certain things to me, that cleared the situation for me.

It was a great relief to me when I found that the only *condition required* of me was *willingness*. I learned that I need only be *willing* to be obedient. I learned that He

would make me good—give me the power I had wanted—if I was *willing* to let Him do so. I understood that He would do the work and that all I had to do was to trust.

The being “born again” did not seem so mysterious. I understood that *He* would recreate me if I gave up that which I had regarded as my right to myself; if I enlisted, *willing* to obey all orders; if I would *surrender* myself to Him; if I would be *willing* to do anything He asked; if I would be *willing* to give myself to Him, and then actually did it.

It took me a few days to understand the meaning of this self-surrender, and let me frankly admit that I shrank from it even though I had been seeking God for years. It meant the giving up of my will, and I had always been very self-willed. Instinctively I felt that when the demon of self-will leaves a man “it teareth him”. It meant giving up all my own objectives and planning. It meant surrendering all my opinions to Him for correction. It meant being willing to surrender everybody and everything. It meant taking up my cross—allowing self-will to be crucified, and following wherever God led me.

If people had in their hearts that which is

in their head and on their lips there would be conversions every time the Lord's prayer is spoken. "Thy will be done" means the giving ourselves to Him. The will is the man, and if we really surrender our will, we surrender ourselves.

Brother Laurence tells us that he found God while looking at the trees in winter: in realizing their lifelessness, and in realizing the Life which would come to them in the Spring. But of course this implies his surrender to that Life.

All my life I had been making my own plans, sometimes asking God's help. I had been doing the fighting, sometimes asking His aid. I realized that this had been wrong and that I must let Him do both the planning and the fighting, and that I need only do the trusting.

He made Himself known to me when I said to Him: "I have been a failure in all ways, and I know I always will be. I want you to take charge of my life". He revealed Himself to me when I said from my heart: "not as I will, but as Thou *wilt*".

Many want to know what God is going to ask them to do before they agree to do it, but He will not tell them. They must trust His love. The surrender must be an absolute sur-

render to obedience, just as it is in enlisting in the army. Even then, He does not lay His whole plan for us, before us. He gives us only one step at a time.

It seemed to me that my surrender was fairly complete. God engineered circumstances so that I thought I might be separated from all my family and friends indefinitely and that I might lose all my property. When I realized that if He asked me to lose these things that He would give me something greater to take their place, He began to shower blessings upon me.

He searched my heart, recalled all my sins to me, and when I saw them as He saw them, and confessed them, He forgave me.

I was a new man. I was no longer in the quicksand. I need no longer sin. The great miracle had happened, and I no longer had any difficulty in believing in lesser ones. To the intellectual "believer" Christianity seems irrational. We *know* only through surrender.

I had sought God direct. I learned how to find Him through the teachings of Jesus and of those who had interpreted Jesus for me. Then, God revealed to me, as He did to Peter, that Jesus was His Son. My conversations

thereafter were with God, with Jesus or with their Holy Spirit whichever One seemed nearer to me at the time.

Dr. Nathan R. Wood has written a very interesting book showing the many reflections of the Triune God. Space is a unity, yet it is made up of three unities—height, breadth and depth. Time is a unity, yet it is made up of three unities—past, present and future. Man is a unity, yet he is made up of his person, his personality and his nature. His nature can only be changed at the Source—God.

I was now "dead to sin", that is, I was separated from sin and I had power over sin. My desires were changed, and I knew my mind would be renewed if I continued to walk with Him. There were pains accompanying that crucifixion of self, and pains accompanying the new birth, but there was also joy, and the pains were not comparable to the pains inherent in sin. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory".

In my last chapter, I left you with the question as to what you individually would have done if I had come to you and asked you how to find God. I believe you could have done

nothing unless you had found God yourself. In the first place, we cannot teach beyond our own experience—cannot show a way unless we have been over it. In the second place you would not have had the Holy Spirit to guide you. If you had one set formula of words, it might or might not have interested me. If you had a dozen ways of putting the truth, you might not have known which way to use. I had thought that my psychology was going to be of use to me in diagnosing the difficulties of those who are searching, and who come to us for help; but I have found that only the Holy Spirit is versatile enough to deal with them. We rely on His guidance.

So far as my reasoning can be a guide, as I look back upon my own situation, I would say that your first step should have been to pray that I would be given the humility to surrender my will to God. We are told to “ask whatsoever ye will”. You could know that it was God’s will that I should find Him. I am sure that my wife’s prayer for my happiness during the years was one of the reasons I found Him.

If you had asked me in the Old Testament sense to look on the “brazen serpent” and had assured me that my salvation depended on it,

I do not know how I should have reacted to it. We call it "intellectual pride", but men often regard it as their "intellectual integrity", and I knew intimately a man who died rather than "violate" it.

Like millions of others I could not believe, even intellectually, that Jesus was the Son of God, and I could not believe that the Bible was the word of God. I would emphasize that I did not *disbelieve*. I was agnostic—I had *surrendered my opinions*. That is what saved me. I was *willing* to believe.

I hope I am making clear to you, in speaking of formulas of words as showing the way to God, that I am speaking of synonymous terms—terms which mean the same thing.

Perhaps I can make this clearer by being specific. If I say you will find God by becoming willing to do His will, I am saying exactly the same thing as when I say you will find God by believing in Jesus Christ. To deny that these are the same is to deny that Jesus Christ was God incarnate.

Some theologians who have not had spiritual experience, do not understand this. When the conventional words are not used they think there must be a change of meaning. They

nominally accept the deity of Jesus, yet differentiate between a surrender to Christ crucified and resurrected, and a surrender to God!

Differences in doctrine are bound to exist if conceptions are merely intellectual—if we attempt to formulate that which is beyond our experience. "Scholarly" interpretations of the scripture may result in many ill-fitting moulds, whereas the interpretation of the Holy Spirit in us corresponds to our particular needs at the time.

These formulas for finding God are paths converging at one point—the point of faith and surrender, or the point of either faith or surrender if you understand that either one includes the other. The formulas are merely different "tongues", and the "gift of tongues" from the Holy Spirit is today as important as ever. You must talk to men in language they can understand.

Naturally if a man is convinced that the Bible is the Word of God, and that Jesus is His Son, you can tell Him that all he needs to do is to accept Him as his Saviour. An *intellectual* belief in the Sonship of Jesus is not enough. "Receiving"—"accepting" Christ is not enough, if He is only accepted by the head.

As used in the Scriptures, believing means trusting. Trusting means a willingness to surrender ourselves.

In short, the conditions for entering the sheepfold are the same whether we use the name God, or the name Jesus. One man will find it easy to accept "Jesus as his Saviour". Another will find it easier to "surrender his will to the Almighty God".

This chapter is a witness of the wonderful love of God. In my "fall from the sixtieth floor", I turned to Him as I approached the street level, and He stretched out His arm and saved me. I had ignored Him nearly all my life; yet He was ready to help when I needed Him, and when I was willing to trust His love. He had been trying to give me many things all my life, and I had been too stupid to receive them.

In the white light of God's standards, I hope I grow more grateful that He should have bothered with such as I. I realize that self was entwined with nearly everything I did, and when I see the "old man" I was move a finger, I want another spike driven into him. I *confess* there was once a time when I thought of Jesus merely as a very good man. Today

I *witness* that the longer I walk with Him, the more I feel my littleness and the more I am awed by His stature. I perceive now that He cannot be explained merely as a son of man. I *confess* I once made a god of my reasoning. Today I *witness* that, although it may be my highest endowment as a natural man, it is *foolishness* to God.

Let us all go into our closet and close the door and ask ourselves: "will I lose a night's sleep to save Jones?" "will I have a spike driven through my right hand to save Smith?" Jesus fasted and prayed for forty days, and was nailed to the Cross for us. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags".

My wife and I know that anything we have is a gift from God. Such faith as we have comes because of our obedience to Him and experiences with Him. Our experiences with Him came because He gave us the desire and courage to trust Him. We know that increasing faith comes as we get to know Him better.

I had long been determined to be able to show The Way to God if I ever found it myself, and I kept, in a book, the directions given me by God, together with my conversations

with Him. I do not believe these are a specific guide for anyone else. We are too apt to make moulds of our own experiences for others. The conditions under which He makes Himself known to us are very definite, but the paths we are to follow afterwards, vary with the individual. There is only one "strait gate and narrow way" *to* Him, but there are many individual paths for us to follow when we walk *with* Him. John came fasting, and Jesus came eating and drinking. "Judge not, that ye be not judged". "Who art thou that judgest"? "What is *that* to thee? follow thou me". We must be careful not to intrude our personal likes and dislikes when we proclaim the gospel.

We find the difficulties of others much the same as ours:

First, they may not be "ready" may not be "ripe" i.e. they may not have attained humility—may not know their own inadequacy—may not know they need a Savior. If this is so, there is nothing for you to do but to leave them to God. It is often very difficult to stand with idle hands and see those we love going down hill, but we must be humble and trust God's love, asking His help in intercessory prayer.

Second, there are those who persist in seeking the Kingdom last, instead of seeking it first.

Everywhere men insist on putting the cart before the horse. They place their material needs first in spite of the promises of Jesus. Clergymen seek to "build up their churches" instead of giving God possession of themselves, so that living water will flow through them. Hundreds of systems for social justice are devised as substitutes for the Kingdom of God, which is called impracticable in spite of the works of St. Paul and Wesley.

Third, there are those who think they must be good before they can find God.

Fourth, there are those who do not understand the meaning of full surrender.

These last three classes can all be helped by showing them the errors in their thinking.

When my wife and I found God, our first prayer was that we should not let go His hand. We had surrendered our objectives, but as time went on we discovered we had not surrendered our self-sanctification. We were back at our old trick of doing the fighting ourselves, and asking His help. Finally, we asked Him to take complete possession of us, and sanctify us.

It is true that we must be willing to be sanc-

tified, and that this willingness must include an earnest desire; but we must also realize our own inability to do it and allow Him to do His work in us. We have found that, if we get ourselves out of the way, He will function in us "automatically" so to speak.

In our last chapter we stated that the object of our life as disciples was to be fruitbearers. We must be careful that our scholarship and our social service do not dim this determination. Sometimes as I look at the churches, it seems as though many of them have forgotten all about conversion.

We become fruitbearers:

First, by *being* branches of the Vine. Spirituality is just as contagious as sensuality. Faith is just as contagious as fear. We bear fruit when we show men by our lives and our words *why* they should want to find God. Second, by refusing to reason about matters of the Spirit. Reasoning about spiritual things never arrives at any conclusion. Their truth is proven by experience—by the methods of exploration or scientific research. Show them *how* they can find God themselves. That is what theology is for.

Remember that the impotence of the church

has always been because of its unbelief, and that the steps to belief are knowing God, through surrendering to Him. It is not our scholarship or "spiritual culture" that counts: it is the degree of our surrender.

The duty of all of us at all times is to *increase the area of our surrender*. This brings us increasing love, understanding and power.

We must give up all self-effort, remembering that God does not help those who help themselves, but helps those who rely solely on Him.

If we do this, the Holy Spirit in His fulness, which was given to the disciples at Pentecost, is given to us.

Let me give you this word of encouragement today: I was about the least likely person of anyone I knew whom God would use, yet God has been using me since I found Him. I believe He has been doing so because I know I am unworthy and never can be worthy as of myself; and because I have tried to get myself out of the way and let Him have possession of me. He says: "My strength is made perfect in weakness".

We must not exult—we must be awed—when He does use us.

WE WITNESS FOR CHRIST

WE witness that we have taken some of the seemingly incredible statements of Jesus—made various surrenders, and thereby have had definite experiences, and therefore attained definite faith.

Imperfect as we are, we are willing—have an earnest desire—to be made perfect, and therefore we obtain answers to many of our prayers. We believe in His promise that as we or any man willeth to do His will, we have as His gift, the privilege of asking, our willingness being counted as obedience.

We face the fact that there is something wrong *in us* if we are not bearing fruit; if we are not living up to the Sermon on the Mount; if we are not believing in His promise to perfect us; if we are not instruments for converting others and healing the sick.

We witness our salvation is due to God's drawing us to Himself—not to our own efforts.

We witness to His changing our desires; and as desire is prayer, to His teaching us to pray.

We witness we do not know how we could have been saved excepting through the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We therefore credit our salvation to prayerful search for God—to prayer.

We witness to its practicability.

We witness to its supernatural power. An omnipotent God is not bound by His own laws. As Father, He gives His children the privilege of asking, and He is influenced by those abiding in Him in ways which do not interfere with His plans for the universe. It is pathetic how little the life and power of God are used by His children for their protection against calamity and sickness.

We witness that we do not know any other way of obtaining bread for the hungry than by going to God for it and receiving it as His gift.

We witness to prayer making work more efficacious—that if we have a great deal to accomplish we must cut down the time spent in work and increase the time spent in prayer.

We witness to the importance of *listening* in prayer—that over one-half of our prayers should be *listening*.

We learn the will of God, by getting our-

selves out of the way, and letting the Holy Spirit do the praying.

We have surrendered any idea of being "spiritual experts". The child is the "spiritual expert". We know that understanding comes only through obedience.

We witness that obedience to God brings happiness—brings joy which is a happiness independent of the world.

We witness God has given us everything we want—more than we want for ourselves.

We witness we have made no real sacrifices. On several occasions it looked as though we were making sacrifices, but as we obeyed, we found we were only giving up the lower for the higher. The reward was peace and joy. We sacrificed the very limited "old" man for a "new" man who has the power to live a victorious life.

We found God by exploration—by experimentation. We doubt if even His existence can be proven by reasoning about Him. The best evidences of Him are His creations.

We found a direct way of communication with Him through our adventure of abandoning our wills to Him. "Woe unto the foolish

prophets that follow their own understanding and have seen nothing”.

We could write thousands of pages about things we do not know. We could write hundreds of pages of things about which we have opinions. We could probably write on one page that which we know.

We know we were dissatisfied although we had everything the world can give.

We know we could not change ourselves.

We know that we prayed our way to God.

We know that we found God when we surrendered our wills to Him, and asked Him to take possession of us.

We know that He changed us and that He satisfies us.

We know that we were born spiritually blind and that now we see.

TO OUR FELLOW WORKERS

To us, the most comforting fact at present is that we of the church have ceased to be self-satisfied.

We are recognizing our unkindness, our pride, our resentments and our judgments. We are recognizing our lack of faith.

The man in the street will be comforted by this, as he was sickened by our quarrels, and by our lack of love and compassion.

Unfortunately he has heard much from the pulpit that was only *opinion*. Where there was supposed to be humility, he was apt to see conceit.

Often he did not go to church because of its lack of reverence and joy. A cloak of solemnity was attempting to take their place.

He was irritated at the conventional professing Christian who took himself so seriously, and the teachings of Jesus so lightly.

He is through with intolerance. He is confused by and tired of opinions. He wants reality. He needs the Kingdom of God.

We must continue to repent.

We must show we are united by faith in Jesus Christ.

We must increase the area of our surrender.

We must receive the fulness of the Holy Spirit.